

Let me finish where I started. I am very concerned about people, on the eve of a State of the Union Address by a President of the United States, talking about the potential use of nuclear weapons by our country. I cannot believe that is what is happening. Just after India and Pakistan, who possess nuclear weapons and do not like each other much, have been shooting at each other, this country is saying, by the way, there might be circumstances in which we could use nuclear weapons. Whoever these two top White House officials are who said this, shame on them.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DORGAN. I am happy to yield.

Mr. REID. The majority leader is not in the Chamber to close the Senate, and I have a couple of questions I would like to ask. Mitch Daniels, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, said on January 16 this year we ought not to hyperventilate about this new deficit estimate. Are you aware that the Senate majority leader said on January 5, 1996: "We have a moral obligation to balance the budget; I am very hopeful that we are going to see to that"? Are you aware he said that?

Mr. DORGAN. It is not surprising. I think the value system for most of us has been we ought to try to have fiscal responsibility and balance the budget.

I say to the head of the Office of Management and Budget, he ought to start hyperventilating. If he does not hyperventilate over this, I guess there is nothing that gets his heart rate or breathing up.

When we talk about the issue of projected surpluses and then huge, suffocating budget deficits as far out as the eye can see, one better hyperventilate a little bit about that.

Mr. REID. Is the Senator aware that on February 1, 1998, the senior Senator from New Hampshire said: "As long as we have a Republican Congress we are going to have a balanced budget, and if we can get a Republican President we can start paying down the debt on the Federal Government"?

That really has not proven to be true, has it?

Mr. DORGAN. It is not true that we have at this point a balanced budget. What is true is the budget is seriously out of balance and headed south. It is going to get worse and we need to fix it. Ignoring it is not going to solve the problem. We need to jump-start this economy with something that is effective and that is a stimulus plan of some type that gives something to the American people to work with, and gives them some confidence.

I happen to believe that Senator DASCHLE, myself, and others who have talked about rebates make a lot of sense. Incentivizing consumption in the short term and incentivizing business investment in the short term, in an immediate and temporary way, is what I think will give some boost to this American economy.

Mr. REID. Is the Senator aware that on November 15, 1995, the junior Sen-

ator from Pennsylvania, now a part of the Senate leadership in the majority, said: "The American people are sick and tired of excuses for inaction to balance the budget. The public wants us to stay the course toward a balanced budget, and we take that obligation quite seriously"?

That really is not the way it is. Is it not true that during the last 4 years of the Clinton administration we spent less money than we took in?

Mr. DORGAN. Oh, yes.

Mr. REID. Is it not true we had a surplus?

Mr. DORGAN. We had very significant and increasing surpluses in the Federal budget. As a result of those surpluses, we began to actually eliminate Federal indebtedness, which relieved some of that burden off the shoulders of our children and their children.

Mr. REID. Is it not true we were even warned the last year of the Clinton administration to be careful, the debt is being paid down too quickly, slow it down or it may have some short-term impact on the economy?

Mr. DORGAN. What is true is when we got to a new fiscal policy proposal by the administration, they said let's cut \$1.7 trillion in taxes because we have surpluses as far as the eye can see. Some of us said—I certainly did—maybe we ought to be a little bit conservative. What if we do not have surpluses forever? What if we run into some tough times? What if the economy runs into trouble? Then guess what happened. Without my vote, Congress passed a very large, permanent tax cut. We quickly discovered we were in a recession. Then we had a terrorist attack on September 11. Then we had a war on terrorism. Then we had the largest corporate scandals in history. All of this happened, it seems to me, suggesting that perhaps some of us who urged caution were right, because what happened is those big budget surpluses are now very big budget deficits.

What does the President say we ought to do about that? Let's provide more 10-year tax cuts to the tune of \$670 billion. When interest is added to it, it is going to be over \$1 trillion. None of that adds up.

Mr. REID. Is the Senator aware that on February 6, 1997, the senior Senator from Nebraska said: "The real threat to Social Security is the national debt. If we do not act to balance the budget and stop adding to the debt, then we are truly placing the future of Social Security in jeopardy"? These huge deficits that have been accumulated during the last 2 years of this administration—the first 2 years, I should say, of this administration, the last 2 years—certainly that is not good for Social Security. Senator HAGEL is right, is that not true?

Mr. DORGAN. What these deficits do is they injure the Social Security system, and the long-term solvency of the Social Security system. There is no question about that. We have a lot

riding on putting this economy back on track. The sooner the better. I think what the President and the Congress need to do is find a way to work together to do something that is effective right now.

Let me thank the Senator from Nevada for his questions.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANTORUM. I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 224

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I understand that S. 224, introduced earlier today, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 224) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

Mr. DASCHLE. I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 225

Mr. DASCHLE. I understand S. 225, introduced earlier today, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 225) to provide for emergency unemployment compensation.

Mr. DASCHLE. I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, we will have more to say about these matters tomorrow. As my colleagues know, this is an ongoing interest on the part of our caucus to move forward in providing benefits to those who are uninsured, especially those who are no longer eligible for current benefits. There are about a million of those people who are looking to us for help, and we will have more to say about that tomorrow.